



Christopher A. Novak  
President & CEO

September 17, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

RE: Dicamba Conditional Re-registration

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

On behalf of CropLife America (CLA), I want to encourage the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to publish a timely and judicious conditional registration decision for over-the-top uses of dicamba products. As farmers begin planning for the 2021 growing season, they need a clear understanding of what tools will be available to help manage weeds and insects. A timely decision from EPA will allow farmers to make the best choices for their farms next Spring.

Following the June 3 Ninth Circuit decision vacating EPA registrations of certain low volatility dicamba products, CLA was very supportive of EPA's authority to issue a cancellation order for three dicamba herbicides, applauding "EPA's leadership in defending the integrity of our nation's risk-based regulatory system established by existing pesticide law."<sup>1</sup> We also understood that the order balanced the EPA's statutory remit and court's ruling to protect both the environment and the farmer's ability to continue using existing stocks at a critical point in the growing season. We know you are facing similar challenges now to balance environmental protections, the farmers' need to control pests, and the legal guidance handed down by the Ninth Circuit.

With an estimated 64 million acres of dicamba-tolerant soy and cotton seeds planted during the 2020 growing season, it is evident farmers need technologies that can address increasingly challenging weed control and weed resistance issues. Farmers are beginning to make decisions now for the Spring 2021 growing season regarding what seeds will be planted and what pesticide products they will use to treat their crops. Farm productivity and farm profitability hinge on the ability of farmers to have multiple tools available to effectively manage weeds. Widespread adoption of dicamba herbicide formulations and their companion biotech traits by farmers in 2019 and 2020 shows the market need for these technologies.

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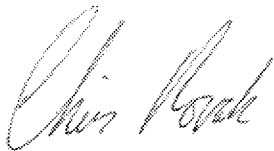
<sup>1</sup> *CropLife America Supports EPA's Protection of Farmers*, CropLife America,  
<http://www.croplifeamerica.org/news/2020/6/18/croplife-america-supports-epas-protection-of-farmers>

Managing weeds and insects is vital to enhancing environmental quality. While leaders debate climate change solutions, herbicides enable regenerative farming practices that protect the environment and reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. Practices such as no-till farming and the use of cover crops provide many benefits, such as reduced soil erosion (by about 90%), water conservation, improved soil health, and reduced fuel use because farmers don't plow their fields between crops.<sup>2</sup> To utilize these conservation practices, however, farmers need a comprehensive set of pest control technologies to maintain productivity while improving environmental management.

As with all new technologies, education and training for appropriate use of the tool is essential. For decades, farmers have demonstrated the practical reality of stewardship and maintained a commitment to improving successful management of crop protection technologies. State Departments of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Services, and registrants have shared in this responsibility, providing myriad educational, training and stewardship opportunities for respective growers to ensure safe and proper pesticide use in their states.

With additional stress being put on our nation's food system by the current pandemic, we ask that you support our farm customers by helping to ensure they have the tools necessary to manage weeds and produce safe and affordable food. We appreciate your leadership in providing farmers a pathway to manage their crop following the Ninth Circuit Court decision. We urge you to act expeditiously on the 2021 dicamba conditional registration to provide farmers that same certainty for the next growing season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Novak".

Chris Novak

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<sup>2</sup> USDA, Seeing is Believing: Soil Health Practices and No-Till Farming Transform Landscapes and Produce Nutritious Food, 2016, available at <https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2016/12/19/seeingbelieving-soil-health-practices-and-notill-farming-transform>